

## Legend Of Voracious Bear Based On Fact

By Emilia J. Hader

Some time ago we received a very nice  
postcard from a 76-year-old resident of Buck-  
port, Maine in Piscataquis County between  
Milpoint and Marion. It memory gives  
the old man's name as F. W. Buckman.

This argumentative man wrote, "Your paper ought to be naming much later in my opinion. I have heard it said that to learn what is going on in Peoria we should read the Bradley Post-Herald."

I am intrigued by the historical aspects by Shirley Donnelly.

"Just recently I found written proof of a legend I have heard all my life and am writing it along. If you find it of interest, you are welcome to use it."

The truth is that we do find the account more than passing interest. Since it is convenient long for a day's column, we are following the theory of splitting it into two parts and using it herself.

We have been saving it for use at this time — we are to use it this week — will write Reader F. W. Buckman as soon as possible on our return to the office and perform duties. We want to get from him additional information on another subject about which he has written, namely that he has had a great personal experience during his life which may also be fitting in the columns of the Post.

But now in the story of a Pocanontas County legend—a legend of bear country which has been shown to have some basis of fact. Within the written record is only a remembrance of a tragic event, the details received are those which have been handed down by word of mouth among the Indians.

By F. W. Ruckman

Second. Policy with 240, old no the  
and the only one of its kind in our  
so far as I have been able to learn  
and in my day no authority than  
the Framers of the

He was educated to read and write  
and to speak, and went to a  
school in the neighborhood of Morgan-  
town, where he met the Bishop As-  
bury, who gave him a journal, and  
told him to keep it in  
the Sunday school of Pocahontas.

... and this seems one hundred  
times more likely to have come  
from a child who has never  
seen a book and who is a child  
of the street. After all  
the first step in the development of a  
child is to teach him to speak  
and I have observed that a poor  
child who has never seen a book  
will speak with a vocabulary  
of 100 words or more.

The father's tracks were heard by the Cochran, an Irish immigrant family, who had settled at the foot of the mountain a short time before. Pursuit and search revealed some fragments of clothing and slight traces of his child on Little Mountain, about two miles away.

The Taylors must have left the country soon afterwards since I find no reference to the name.

—SCHLEY, W. VA., THURSDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 17, 1947



## People Rushed From Here After Bear Stolen Child

This is a picture of the Co-  
-sue house, located in Pocahontas  
County. Pocahontas is the set-  
ting for a legend dealing with a  
boar. The full legend is recounted  
in the *Top O' The Morning*  
column on this page. The narrative  
and this picture were pre-  
pared by F. W. Bussell of  
Buckeye. Buckeye ranch, barn  
and house were purchased by  
David L. Rockman in 1926,  
and have been in possession of  
the Rockman clan ever since. He  
presents the ranch and the old  
house as follows: "The

**Stolen Child**  
our sons have been  
served as a punishment to the  
men who with their Powder  
and axe, and intestinal partake  
carved out all the wilderness.  
The foolish and unmerciful  
have left us a rich building  
which we should usurp, one  
and all.

# Legend Of Voracious Bear Based On Fact

By Emile J. Hodel

Some time ago we received a very nice letter from a 74-year-old resident of Buckeye, up in Pocahontas County between Millpoint and Marlinton if memory does not fail us. He is F. W. Ruckman.

This septuagenarian wrote, "Your paper seems to be gaining much favor in my county. I've heard it said that to learn what is going on in Pocahontas we should read the Beckley Post-Herald.

"I am intrigued by the historical articles by Shirley Donnelly.

"Just recently I found written proof of a legend I have heard all my life and am sending it along. If you find it of interest, you are welcome to use it."

—o—

The truth is that we do find the account of more than passing interest. Since it is somewhat long for a day's column, we are taking the liberty of splitting it into two sections and using it herein.

We have been saving it for use at this time — we are on vacation this week — and will write Reader F. W. Ruckman as soon as possible on our return to the office and normal duties. We want to get from him additional information on another subject about which he has written. It seems that he has had a great personal experience during his life which may also merit telling in the columns of the Post-Herald.

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But now to the story of a Pocahontas County legend — a legend of bear country which has been shown to have some basis in fact. Though the written record is only a bare mention of a tragic event, the details supplied are those which have been handed down by word of mouth among Pocahontas people.

By F. W. Ruckman

A legend, hoary with age, old as the

The father's tragic ends were held by the Cochran family, who had settled at the foot of the mountain a short time before. The search revealed some fragments of clothing and slight traces of the bear on Little Mountain, about two miles distant.

The Naylers must have left the country soon afterwards since I find no mention of the name.

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## People Rushed

This is a picture of the Cochran house, located in Pocahontas County. Pocahontas is the setting for a legend dealing with a bear. The full legend is recounted in the Top O' The Morning column on this page. The narrative and this picture were pro-

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## By F. W. Ruckman

A legend, hoary with age, old as the  
nation, and the only one of its kind in our  
state, so far as I have been able to learn  
was recorded by no less an authority than  
Bishop Francis Asbury.

My son, who learned to read and write,  
put on shoes recently and went on a  
journey up to the settlement at Morgantown. There he saw in the Bishop As-  
bury's three-volume journal some facts  
about things that happened right here in  
the Buckeye region of Pennsylvania  
County.

The legend is that some one hundred  
and sixty-seven years ago a bear came  
into a clearing where a man was working  
in the field and carried off and ate a child.

Naturally details became hazy after  
so great a time, causing argument as to  
the name of the family, the exact loca-  
tion, and some even doubted that it ever  
happened. My interest was rekindled  
when I read Bishop Asbury's journal  
entry and I set out to learn what the story  
boiled down to.

Mrs. Ed Hobleft, who was raised on the  
opposite side of the mountain from me,  
and both of us about a crow-measured  
mile from the scene of the tragedy, had  
the clearest version. Her mother was a  
natural born historian, as was her great  
aunt, Mary Cackley.

The name of the family, they remem-  
bered, was Naylor. The young pioneer  
had built a little cabin on a rolling bench  
in a low gap in the mountain. He had  
cleared a field and was plowing it in the  
spring with a homemade bull-tongue plow.

Mrs. Naylor was "feelin' poorly," so  
the father, wishing to be helpful, took the  
child along to the field. The day was  
warm and sunny. The child was left in a  
comfortable spot where the father could  
see it as he passed by while at work.

All was peaceful until the horrified  
father saw a large bear carrying the  
screaming child into the forest.

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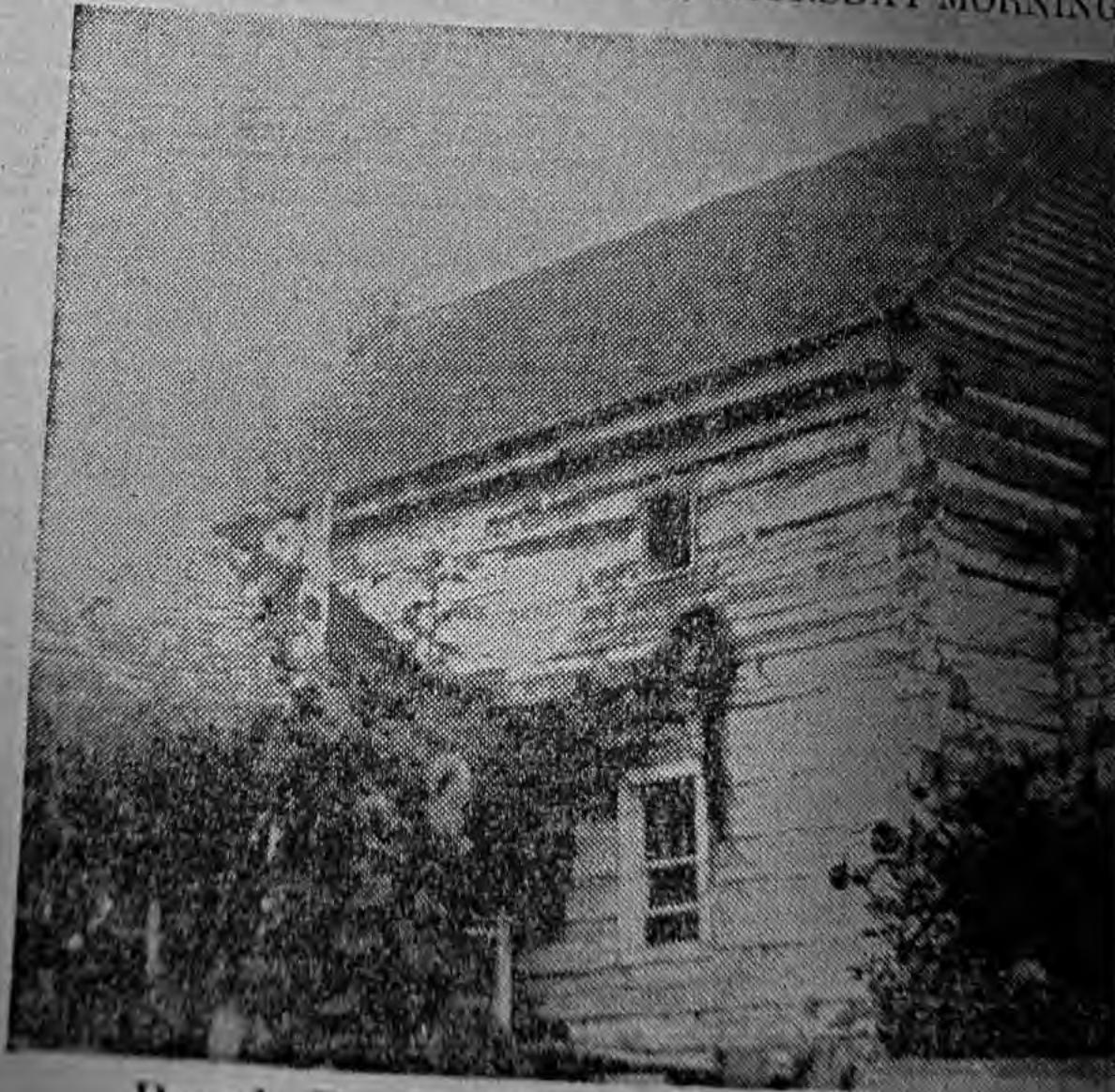
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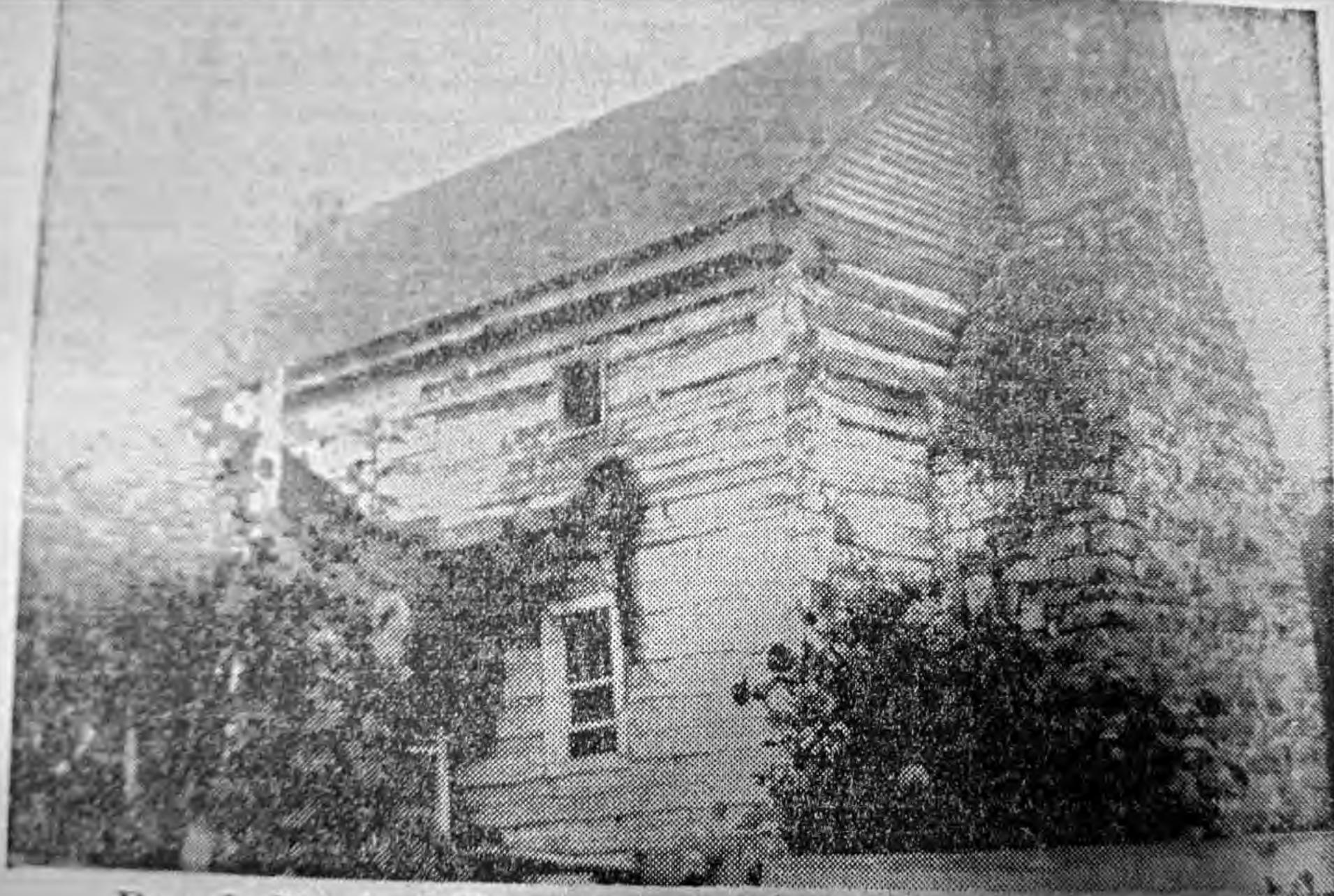
— BUCKLEY, W. VA., THURSDAY MORNING



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## People Rushed From Here After Bear, Stolen Child

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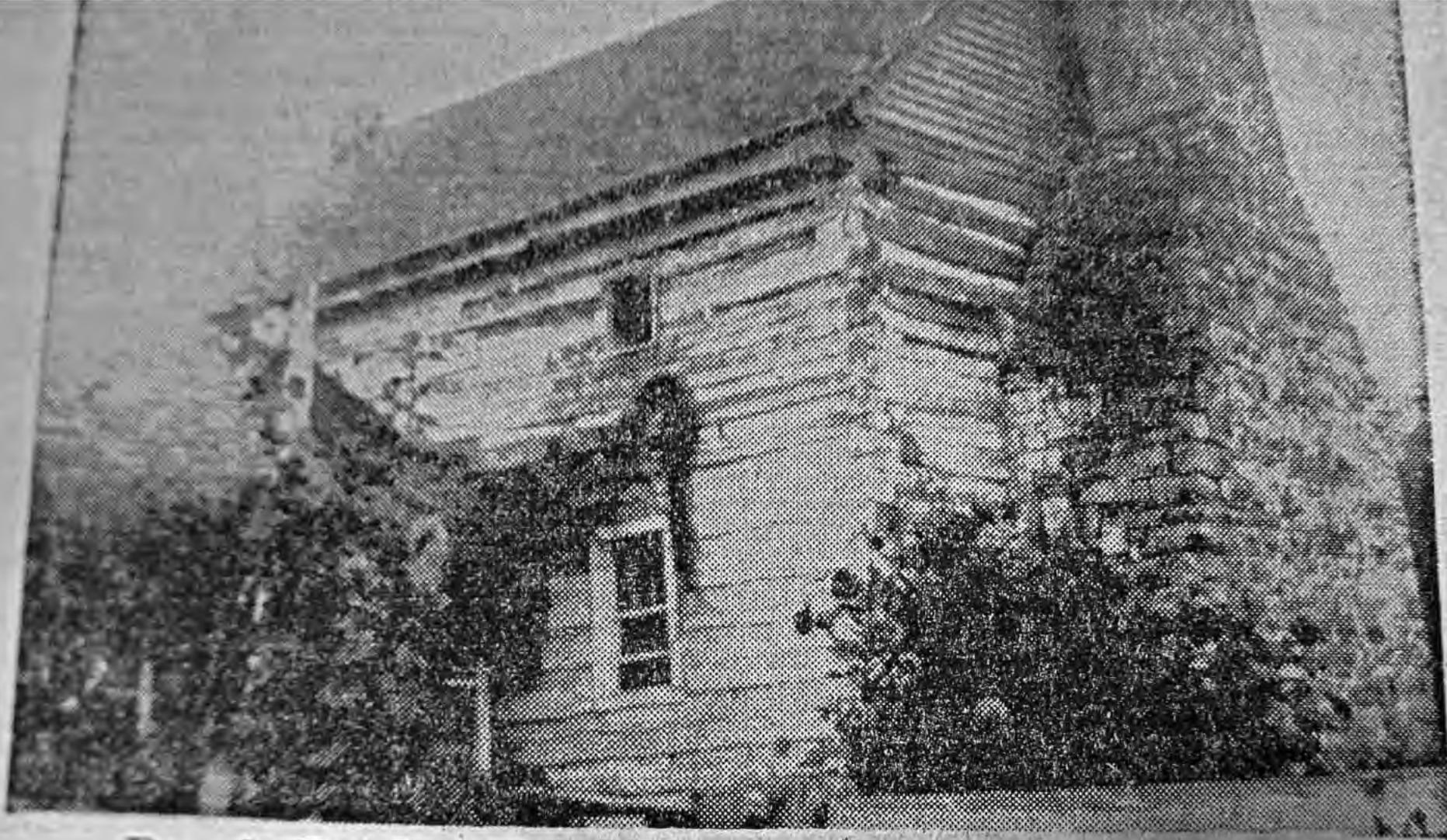


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house) should have been preserved as a monument to the pioneers, who with faith, powder, an axe, and intestinal fortitude, carved out of the wilderness fertile farms; built comfortable homes; left us a rich heritage which we should nourish and perpetuate."



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